1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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given on p. 528). Others are Tsonara the fisherman (*ara* = to catch fish with rod and hook); Ataras, the pinna shell; Kuka, the crab; Toa, the fowl; Idetesoan, men carrying a prisoner on a stretcher (*tesoan*) to the place where he is to be eaten; Bannus, a bird with wings spread and an almond in his mouth. Another group represents two men with a dog behind them, pursued by a crocodile which is trying to eat the dog, and another, two brothers, one of whom is teaching the other how to copulate. The Milky Way is called Ru'in (= water) and is thought to be a river. The tides are connected with a constellation called Bobo, which is supposed to resemble a fish. When Bobo sets into the sea the tide comes in and swallows up the shore, i.e. there is an exceptionally high tide. When Bobo twinkles, it is because the fish is eating a stone.

The people living on the east coast of Buka have more knowledge of the stars than those of the north coast of Bougainville, because they use them for guidance on long voyages in big plank canoes, the Bougainville people contenting themselves with much shorter local journeys. The Kurtatchi people told me this, and it was confirmed by inquiries made on a visit to Hanahan (E. Buka), where I obtained a detailed description of a canoe being steered by the stars to the island of Nissan (see p. 381). At Kurtatchi the people were not much interested in these matters, and few knew anything about them.

FLORA AND FAUNA

I can make no attempt to give a scientific account of the flora and fauna of the region. It seems to be essentially similar to that of other parts of Melanesia, which has been described by Guppy and others. The following notes are given in order to provide a picture of the environment in which the natives live and work, and on the products of which they are dependent for their subsistence and for the means of manufacturing practically all of their material possessions.

All, even the children, have an extraordinarily detailed knowledge of the trees, shrubs, and even of the small plants and grasses that grow in their locality. Many of these are, of course, utilized in some way or other, as food, or for 'making medicine', or in connexion with one or other of the native crafts. But they can

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501 [426] a large *mon* is very great, and there is not much occasion for its use, such canoes are sometimes lent to other villages when required for a special occasion.

[343] The *mon* is used for long journeys, or for bonito fishing. It is kept in a specially built shed (*kek*) on the shore near a place convenient for launching. It is always carried down to the water, several men or boys helping on each side (Pl. 53), and must never be dragged along the ground like a dug-out, or it would suffer injury. At the edge of the reef, if the tide is low, or at the edge of the water if it is high, the canoe is laid down, and its crew watch carefully for a break in the surf-waves through which they can run with it, shouting in their excitement, and jumping in as soon as it reaches deep water. To watch for a favourable time to get through the surf is *warēn ia*, to take advantage of a pause in the rollers to launch it is *wasiaro* (*siaro* also means fair weather).

Paddling. Except for the seat at the stern, which is occupied by the steersman only, two paddlers sit on each *poan*, the width of which necessitates their sitting so close to each other that one wonders their movements are not hampered by the proximity. If the number of people available is insufficient, some of the *poan* may be occupied by one person only, in which case he paddles on alternate sides, otherwise there is no possibility of changing over, an amenity which they do not seem to miss. The paddle is the same as that used in the dug-out canoe, which has been described on p. 369. The paddle used by the steersman does not differ from that of the others. They take one strong stroke, with the paddle held upright, close to the side of the boat, alternating with a short stroke with the paddle held in a more sloping position and slightly away from it. Women paddle as well as men, and with equal facility. But there are certain *mon*, decorated with one particular design, which women may not enter (see p. 433), and they may not possess or use paddles ornamented with the conventional figure (*kokorra*) shown in Fig. 27 (p. 435). With a following wind, a large leaf may be held up to act as a sail, supplementing, but never replacing, the efforts of the paddlers.

502 484 439 *Voyages*. The people of the North Bougainville coast are not great sailors, and seldom venture on trips more than a few miles from the shore. Those of Buka, particularly the men of Lontis and Hanahan, are more venturesome, and go, on occasion, as far as the island of Nissan, a trip involving little short of a hundred

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miles, mostly of open and sometimes stormy sea, to buy the pigs for which Nissan is famous. One such expedition, about two years—so far as I could interpret their vague ideas as to time—before my arrival, met with disaster, two canoes and about forty men being lost. No trip had been made since. While I was there the Hanahan people were talking of making another, but it seemed doubtful whether it would materialize. I obtained from a Hanahan native an account of such a trip, which I give, in spite of its length, because it contains several points of interest. Unfortunately I have no record of the time of year at which this voyage is supposed to have taken place, so it is not possible to identify the stars which serve as guide.

A Voyage to Green Island (Nissan)

When people go to Green Island, they start in a *mon* about sunset. When they get to the open sea it is dark. A star called Ton comes into sight, straight in front of them, in the direction they want to go. Then another comes up, it is called Data. When Data has risen completely, they pick up another star, called Seiposa. When Seiposa has risen, there is another called Totonolo (that is the name of a big fish which has a large mouth and two hands). When it has come up, Reki (flying fox) comes, then another star, Wisiessi. When they are nearly there they see Kulu (a pigeon which has almonds in its mouth). Then they pick up Kuri (big freshwater crab). When it has risen they pick up Ienatchena (big fish). Then comes Tonlan (the morning star). When they see Tonlan, one man stands up, he looks, and looks, and looks. As soon as it is light enough he sees land a long way off. It is called Haputan. Then he says: 'Come on, paddle, you fellows, paddle the canoe, I think we can see Haputan.' Then they all paddle hard, and come up closer, and all the trees look big now. That is Green Island.

Then one man, who knows how to make rain, takes a drinking coco-nut, and sings a song. I do not know what it is, only the *tsunaun* know it. Then all the men drink one coco-nut, they drink all of it, then they eat taro. They do not stop to eat on the journey, in case a big wind comes and catches the *mon*; then they would all be lost. When they have finished eating they all wash in the sea; then the canoe goes ashore on the island. When they have all gone ashore, the man who knows how to make rain talks, and a big wind comes up at Hanahan, and breaks branches off the trees belonging to the people of Hanahan; then they know that the canoe has arrived. They say: 'The canoe has gone ashore at Green Island, it is not lost.' When the canoe gets back they do the same, they make a big wind blow on Green Island, so that the people there know that it has got home safely.

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484 The people of Hanahan go to Green Island to get *beroan* (shell currency) and fish, because the fishing at Hanahan is not good. They also
439 buy pigs, because the pigs of Green Island are bigger than the pigs at
197 Hanahan. The people of Green Island are the same people as those of Hanahan, and talk the same language, but the people of Green Island talk very slowly, it sounds as if they were sad and wanted to cry. (Here the speaker gave an imitation, in a high-pitched voice with a whining tone and a drop at the end of every sentence.) They pay for the *beroan* and the pigs and the fish with taro, pots, and paint, which they get from Tiop.

484 They stop two days, and fish; there are plenty of fish at Green Island.
[789] When the men are ready to come back, a man of Green Island takes hold of the canoe and says some words to make the canoe run quickly and come back to Hanahan. The people of Green Island know these words, the Hanahan people do not know them. They leave at dusk, and come back to Hanahan in the early morning. They do not take so long as they did to go to Green Island, because the sea pushes the canoe.

502 Here the narrator ceased, but further inquiry elicited the information that they steer by the same stars, watching till they are high enough in the sky to be seen in front of the canoe. When they get near home they look for the point called Hanapan (the most northerly headland on Buka) and for the highest mountain on Buka, which they call Langono (I am not sure just where this is). When they get closer to the shore they must steer away from the island or else they would be carried round the northern edge of the island on to the Lontis coast. They beach the canoe at sunrise.

House-building

361 From the plan and description of the village given in Chapter I, it will be seen that the huts (*inu*) are always set up in lines. When a new one is to be added to the line, the position of the front is determined by stretching a piece of creeper or fibre string along the line of the houses already in position, and continuing it farther to the site of the new one. The backs of the huts are not alined, as some are much longer than others, owing to the fact that increase in size is always obtained by adding to the length at the back, the width remaining practically constant in all.

342 The first procedure in house-building is to put in pieces of stick to mark the corners, using the string as above described. Along the sides, uprights (*kurik*) are set up in double rows, just wide enough apart for the insertion between them of the slats which they are

is lancet-shaped and takes up about one-half of the whole club; the greatest width of the striking end in the middle amounts to about 7 1/2 centimeters; along the [32] middle of the lancet-shaped striking end there runs a raised center rib all the way to the extreme point; as a rule the blade is provided with an engraved ornamentation on one side. The upper half comprises the shaft or the handle; it is about 4 to 4 1/2 centimeters wide and is pointed at the top. The entire handle is wrapped with strips of rattan, in such a way that each circle of red-dyed rattan (about 8 centimeters wide) is succeeded by a wrapping of yellow rattan of the same dimensions, and so on alternately all the way to the end.

Navigation

It has already been mentioned that active commerce by water goes on between the various coastal and island tribes, and that boat trips not infrequently extend to great distances. Therefore it is understandable that the Solomon Islanders expend great care in the production of their boats. For normal fishing in the immediate vicinity of the coast and on the coral reefs they use rafts and simple boats with outriggers. For longer journeys they use boats constructed carefully of boards and without outriggers.

As a rule the rafts consist of three or four tree trunks laid adjacent to each other and pointed at both ends; the individual trunks are fastened to one another by means of hardwood pegs.

Simple boats are made of a single tree trunk; they come to a point at both ends and have two or three outriggers and floats, depending on their length. On the island of Nissan these boats are especially narrow so that the hollowed-out space just suffices for placing one leg in front of the other; these Nissan boats frequently have outriggers and floats on both sides. As a rule these boats are not used for long journeys; they are used in calm weather for fishing on the high seas and for traffic in the harbors shut off by islands and reefs. These boats come in all sizes; from a few meters long and barely sufficing to carry one man, up to a length sufficient for 5 to 6 occupants. As a rule the larger ones have a platform on the outriggers that is parallel to the long axis of the boat and consisting of staves placed close together and attached to the wood of the outriggers; sometimes a

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531
171

The ornamentation in Buka is a double one: it consists either of a row of the grotesque heads and human figures that are characteristic for this region in varying arrangements, or it is a row of reversed vees. All ornaments are executed in bas relief and painted black, red and white. In the Shortland Islands the very high prow is frequently decorated with a carved human figure; according to the statements of natives this is a personification of the tutelary deity who grants [776] auspicious sea voyages and wards off evil spirits. In Buka the prow and stern are ornamented with an approximately 40 centimeter wide fringe, which extends from the tip of the prow to the waterline. This fringe (kehakehala) consists of red-dyed dried leaf strips of a species of palm.

The joints are tightened by smearing them with the pulverized [824] nut of parinarium laurinum. In order to give the light shell greater 396 resistance and durability, wooden frames are set into the boat, which press firmly against the sides and are fastened to these at the edge. These frames (in Buka called mapou) are cut from a single piece and, corresponding to the inside shape of the boat, are almost semicircular. The two upper ends of the semicircle are connected by a straight piece of wood. From the middle of this two or three props lead to the semicircle, which is thereby given greater rigidity. Also the thwarts for the rowers serve this purpose; they are notched underneath in such a way that the notches project beyond the edges of the boat on both sides and prevent them from bending in or out. These boats vary greatly in size; there are many that comfortably carry 40 adults and in addition a considerable cargo. In the middle of the large chieftains' boats a small platform is built on which the owner stands, with bow and arrow in hand.

The rowers sit together in pairs on the thwarts and propell the 502 boat with light oars that are different in the north and the south. In 171 the Shortland Islands the oar (fase) has a wider and shorter blade than in Buka; at the upper end the handle is provided with a small crook that projects at a right angle and gives the hand a comfortable means of grasping it powerfully. These oars are very well planed, but other- 501 wise unornamented. In Buka the oar (hose) is equipped with a long, 171 pointed, lancet-shaped blade and this is frequently decorated in bas relief--usually with the characteristic grotesque head or human figure, sometimes with a bird or fish, and sometimes also with round figures or zigzag lines; here the handle is never provided with a crook. I would like to mention that this characteristic Buka oar is still rather common nowadays, but it is cited completely erroneously in handbooks

as well as in museums as stemming from New Mecklenburg (New Ireland). I find this statement first in the work by Schmeltz and Krause on the Godeffroy Museum (which first appeared in 1881), and although Schmeltz subsequently corrected this statement, it has nevertheless--like many another mistake--been widely circulated. The oars depicted by Schmeltz and Krause are quite characteristic for the extreme northwest of the Solomon Islands; nowhere else does one find the ornamentation represented on the oar blades, which one with justification can designate as the coat of arms of Buka and the neighboring tribes. The figure bears the name kokora.

The rowing is done at various tempos, but the oars are always placed in the water simultaneously, whether the tempo is slow or rapid. The faster the tempo, the deeper the blade of the oar is dipped and the farther the trunk of the body is bent forward; then the light boat shoots across the waves with great velocity and in an hour quite often covers ten nautical miles. A few years ago on the east coast of Buka I saw a boat that was manned by 36 rowers maintain this velocity for almost two hours; the chieftain who was standing up in the boat spurred his men on with loud cries. On the high seas, the slender vessel literally flew from one wave to the next; occasionally, when it was crossing a high wave, over one-third of the long body was hovering above the water. With a watch in my hand I [34] observed the rapidity of the oar strokes for a time and found that it was never less than 35 strokes per minute, but from time to time increased up to 60 per minute. At a normal and medium tempo the rowing is accompanied as a rule by a peculiar howling singing; at a rapid and the most rapid tempo, however, all is silent, and at most one hears from time to time the encouraging cry of the chieftain. Even the women know how to handle the oars well; they take care of the market traffic, and therefore one rather frequently sees large boats occupied only by women (with at most an old man at the rudder), who are going from the islands to the opposite mainland in order to trade fish etc. for taro and other foodstuffs.

Fishing

Fishing is a main occupation on the islands as well as on the coasts. In his book Guppy gives an exhaustive description of the fishing methods current in the Shortland Islands. They are also in use further north. As far as nets are concerned, I observed seines of great